

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEHRAN 05364 191134Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----004622 191145Z /40
R 190931Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3103
INFO USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 5364

EXDIS

NOFORN

BRUSSELS FOR USNMR

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, IR
SUBJ: AUDIENCE WITH SHAH

REF: TEHRAN 5346

1. DURING MY JUNE 18 AUDIENCE WITH THE SHAH, HE REFERRED TO LETTER HE HAD RECEIVED FROM PRESIDENT CARTER ON AWACS, IN WHICH IT WAS STATED THAT I WOULD BRIEF HIM FURTHER ON ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINTS. HE INVITED ME TO DO SO.

2. I BEGAN BY REFERRING TO MEETING WHICH SECRETARY VANCE, ROY ATHERTON AND I HAD HELD WITH AMBASSADOR ZAHEDI IN WASHINGTON. SHAH NODDED ACQUAINTANCE WITH SUBSTANCE OF THAT TALK. I THEN WENT ON TO DISCUSS PROBLEM IN TWO DIMENSIONS. FIRST WAS PRESIDENT CARTER'S CONVICTION, AS REFLECTED IN DECISION MEMORANDUM, THAT THERE WERE TOO MANY WEAPONS FLOATING AROUND THE WORLD AND THAT US HAD TO TAKE LEAD IN REDUCING THEM. SECOND WAS ATTITUDE OF US CONGRESS TOWARDS ARMS TRANSFERS AND
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PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH LEGISLATIVE APPROVAL PROCESS.

3. I POINTED OUT THAT, IN FY77, IRAN WOULD BE FAR AND AWAY THE LARGEST PURCHASER OF US ARMS AND THEREFORE A TEMPTING TARGET TO THE CONGRESS. I ALLUDED TO IRAN'S IMAGE PROBLEMS IN CONGRESS (SEE SEPTTEL) AND SAID THAT THERE WERE LIMITS ON WHAT EXECUTIVE BRANCH COULD ACHIEVE. I ALSO

POINTED OUT THAT, GIVEN ALL ACQUISITIONS ON WHICH IRAN HAD ALREADY SUBMITTED LOA'S, IT WOULD PROBABLY BE PHYSICALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO ADD ANYTHING MORE THAT COULD BE ACQUIRED IN FY 1977, IN ANY CASE. I SAID THAT I UNDERSTOOD GENERAL TOUFANIAN WAS EN ROUTE TO WASHINGTON AND I EXPECTED GENERAL FISH TO COME HERE. IT WOULD BE MY ASSUMPTION HTAT THESE TWO VISITS WOULD CLARIFY MATTERS.

4. THE SHAH BEGAN WITH HIS USUAL ASSERTION THAT "WE ARE NOT BEGGARS" AND SEEK NO SPECIAL FAVORS FROM THE US. HE HAD DECIDED SOME TIME AGO TO STANDARDIZE HIS AIR FORCE ON US MODELS. HE STILL PREFERRED THAT COURSE. HOWEVER, IF WE DECLINED TO SELL HIM AIRCRAFT, OUR EUROPEAN FRIENDS WERE READILY AVAILABLE. HE MENTIONED THE MCRA AND THE MIRAGE 2000. THIS WOULD COMPLICATE HIS LOGISTICS, BUT WOULD MEET HIS NEEDS. HE STRESSED THAT HE WOULD "TAKE NO UMBRAGE" IF WE DECLINED, BUT HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE SAD FOR BOTH OF US IF IT TURNED OUT THAT WAY.

5. HE THEN WENT BACK TO THE ORIGINAL PREMISE OF ARMS LIMITATIONS. HE COUNTED THE TANKS, AIRCRAFT AND SAM'S IN IRAQ AND LIBYA. HE QUESTIONED SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO FOREGO OPPORTUNITIES FOR MISCHIEF. HE FELT THE CONCEPT COMMENDABLE, BUT THE OUTLOOK DIM. AND THEN HE DROPPED THE SUBJECT. (NEITHER F-16 NOR F-18L WAS MENTIONED BY NAME.)
SULLIVAN

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